AUM

As fire, being one, on entering the world, is assimilated to form after form; so the inner elf of all being is assimilated to form after form, and yet remains outside them.

—*Katha Upanishad*

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THE STRENGTH OF BROTHERHOOD

WRITING in the *Path* for March, 1887, Mr. Judge gave an account of the spirit and intent of the Movement that had begun in 1875, offering, as well, certain eeds of prophecy. He said:

A new age is not far away. The huge, unwieldly flower of the 19th century civilization, has almost fully bloomed, and preparation must be made for the wonderful new flower which is to rise from the old. We have not pinned our faith on Vedas nor Christian scriptures, nor desired any others to do so. All our devotion to Aryan literature and philosophy arises from a belief that the millions of minds who have trodden weary steps before ours, left a path which might be followed with profit, yet with discrimination. For we implicitly believe that in this curve of the cycle, the final authority is *the man himself*. In former times the disclosed Vedas, and later, the teachings of the great Buddha, were the right authority, in whose authoritative teachings and enjoined practices were found the necessary steps to raise Man to an upright position. But now the grand clock of the Universe points to another hour, and now Man must seize the key in his hands and himself—as a whole—open the gate. Hitherto he has depended upon the great souls whose hands have stayed impending doom. Let us then together enter upon another year, fearing nothing, assured of strength in the Union of Brotherhood. For how can we fear death, or life, or any horror or evil, at any place or time, when we well know that even death itself is a part of the dream which we are weaving before our eyes?

Our belief may be summed up in the motto of the Theosophi-

> cal Society, "There is no religion higher than Truth," and our practice consists in a disregard of any authority in matters of religion and philosophy except such propositions as from their innate quality we feel to be true.

Here is stated the teaching with respect to those who undertake to be pioneers in the course of human development. Mr. Judge strikes the note of courage, of enterprise and self-reliance, pointing to the heritage of philosophical literature in which may be found guidance for generating individual certainty based upon self-knowledge. The time has come, he points out, for this development.

As we look about today, and read the works of the thoughtful historians and critics of our time, we see the circumstantial necessity for such a change in the outlook of human beings. For well-nigh countless reasons, the faith in institutions inherited from the past is rapidly dying. The traditional forms of religious orthodoxy command an allegiance which lessens day by day. The theologians are themselves riddled by doubts and questioning—which may be recognized as a sign of health, not in religious institutions, but in individuals who are making themselves ready to break with the past. And in what seems quite sudden succession, the authority of science is also waning. The claim that science is a source of "truth" is now seldom heard, and even science as a dispenser of material benefits has fallen under the shadow of nuclear horrors and the ravaging effects of industrialism. The critics of science are among the most articulate men of our time, and sometimes include the scientists themselves.

With the recognition that the conclusions of science are at root conceptual accounts of selected abstract relationships in the natural world, it has become evident that our science may be as faulty as our language, and that it gives us only limited mechanical certainties, providing no sense of the meaning of human life. For many, this has brought only the dread realization that there is no longer any established authority concerning what men ought to think and do.

Anticipation of the change in attitude toward science was clearly expressed in *The Secret Doctrine*. H.P.B. wrote in 1888 (I, 610):

> Science is, undeniably, ultra-materialistic in our days; but it finds, in one sense, its justification. Nature behaving *in actu* ever esoterically, and being, as the Kabalists say, *in abscondito*, can only be judged by the profane through her appearance, and that appearance is always deceitful on the physical plane.

> On the other hand, the naturalists refuse to blend physics with metaphysics, the body with its informing soul or spirit, which they prefer ignoring. This is a matter of choice with some, while the minority strive very sensibly to enlarge the domain of physical science by trespassing on the forbidden grounds of metaphysics, so distasteful to some materialists. These scientists are wise in their generation. . . . Now that they have studied nature in the length and breadth, and thickness of her physical frame, it is time to remove the skeleton to the second plane and search within the unknown depths for the living and real entity, for its SUB-*stance*—the noumenon of evanescent matter.

There has been no noticeable attempt as yet among scientists to blend physics with metaphysics. Actually, without a radical change in assumptions, there can be no acceptable idea of how to go about such an enterprise. But there is, on the other hand, a strong perception of the inadequacy of scientific conceptions. A contemporary writer, Allen Wheelis, has described with skill and brevity the present situation:

> With the Modern Age, in a great burst of optimism, we came upon a new method of arriving at certainty, the scientific method, believed that the truths so achieved would endure forever. Newton's laws became the archetype of such sureness, and we hoped to apply the method which had yielded these presumably immutable laws to the behavior of men and nations. Gradually this vision has faded, now is lost. The methods of physics do not encompass life, and the behavior of men cannot be reduced to casual formulations. . . . We live now on the far ragged edge of the Modern Age. The market for absolute truths, scientific or social, is in shambles. . . . The holders of power act, and, without conviction in the principles which once shaped ends, their actions proceed toward whatever ends the means at hand are suited to, and the only value is the efficiency with which we do whatever it is that we do. We have gained systems analysis, lost the knowledge of good and evil.
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> Technology progresses, but for destruction as much as nurture. Our great gains in knowing and in power serve the same old mixture of good and evil. In goodness of heart we have gained nothing.
>
> Moral certainty has disappeared, the Enlightenment mandate to reshape the world is remembered as a dream. Utopias have become fatuous, revolutions breed tyranny; tides of blood having risen in the cause of freedom recede, leaving empires of slavery. We abandon the world then and take up psychology. (*The Moralist,* 1973.)

But without inner resources, the loss of both religious and scientific authority leads directly to a nihilist state of mind. The rootless-

ness of the present is everywhere illustrated in current events. As Dr. Wheelis says:

> What are the sources of morality? Freedom, justice, brotherhood—these are our noblest words, and in their names we enact monstrous crime. Is it conceivable that some principle of behavior might yet be found that would not again and almost instantly be put to the use of murder?
>
> . . . Better we not seek a new morality: we could not improve on freedom and justice and love. Better, rather, we seek some gain in awareness, some shift or extension of empathy, which may enable us better to use what we already know about good and evil. . . .
>
> As it happens, we have a proposal: let nihilists be required to earn a license. Each and every candidate for nihilism who acts to relieve suffering, to better the human lot, who takes all the risks of a life given over to such action—not just the risk of failure but the risk of making things worse, not just the risk of being shot but the risk of being a fool, of falling on one's face —will be given a license to teach us his vision of life as meaningless. All other candidates will be rejected as unqualified.

What is Dr. Wheelis getting at, here? He seems to be saying, in effect, that in our time the breakdown of external authority has its only remedy in unselfishness—in "acts to relieve suffering, to better the human lot." He is suggesting that beyond the "nihilism" of disillusionment lies the substance of a new faith, but that it can be born only from generosities of the heart. For those who practice altruism, nihilistic despair will pass away, since their lives will generate a new vision of meaning.

In this simple counsel may be seen something of the promise of the moral maturity of the twentieth century, if it can be realized during the years ahead. For here is awareness that when the certainties of a cycle of civilization crumble, human beings are thrown on their own resources, and that they must then build new foundations for their lives out of their own motives, their own humanity. Altruism is indeed the source of the sense of reality and meaning for spiritual beings. It was no moral rhetoric that declared Compassion to be the Law of Laws. Brotherhood was not made the First Object of the Theosophical Movement only for hopeful humanitarian reasons, but from the fact that no self-knowledge can grow without it. Brotherhood is the only *saving* principle of human life. Without altruism, discovery of the endless relativities underlying what men have believed to be knowledge can bring only despair and hopelessness—nihilism, as Dr. Wheelis says. The acute critical

intelligence of the men of the twentieth century has brought them to the edge of the abyss of meaninglessness in external forms of truth and authority. Fortunately, there are those who recognize the significance of this confrontation—that the time has come for men to seek in themselves the sources of truth and meaning. There is strength and purpose in ourselves, for those who learn to listen to the inner voice. This is the awakening to which the great clock of the universe points.

Nature Geometrizes

The term "God"—unless referring to the Unknown Deity or *Absoluteness,* which can hardly be supposed *acting* in any way—has always meant in ancient philosophies the collectivity of the working and intelligent Forces in nature. The word "Forest" is singular, yet it is the term to express the idea of thousands or even millions of trees of different kinds. Materialists have the option of saying "Nature," or still better—"Law geometrizes" if they so prefer. But in the days of Plato, the average reader would hardly have understood the metaphysical distinction and real meaning. The truth, however, of Nature ever "geometrizing" is easily ascertained. Here is an instance: Heat is the modification of the motions or particles of matter. Now, it is a physical and mechanical law that particles or bodies in motion on themselves, assume a spheroidal form—this, from a globular planet down to a drop of rain. Observe the snowflakes, which along with crystals exhibit to you all the geometrical forms existing in nature. As soon as motion ceases, the spheroidal shape alters; or, as Tyndall tells us, it becomes a flat drop, then the drop forms an equilateral triangle, a hexagon and so on. In observing the breaking up of ice-particles in a large mass, through which he passed heat rays, he observed that the first shape the particles assumed, was triangular or pyramidal, then cubical and finally hexagonal, &c. Thus, even modern physical science, corroborates Plato and justifies his proposition.

—H. P. Blavatsky

THREADS OF OCCULT SCIENCE

IX

THE expression "physico-materialism," as well as its pendant "spirito" or "metaphysico-materialism," may be newly coined words, but some such are rigorously necessary in a publication like the *Theosophist* and with its present non-English editor. If they are not clear enough, we hope C.C.M. or some other friend will suggest better. In one sense every Buddhist as well as every Occultist, and even most of the educated Spiritualists, are, strictly speaking, Materialists. The whole question lies in the ultimate and scientific decision upon the nature or essence of FORCE. Shall we say that FORCE is—Spirit, or that Spirit is—a force? Is the latter physical or spiritual, *Matter* or SPIRIT? If the latter is something—it must *be* material, otherwise it is but a pure abstraction, a *no*-thing. Nothing which is capable of producing an effect on any portion of the physical,—objective or subjective—Kosmos can be otherwise than material. Mind—whose enormous potentiality is being discovered more and more with every day, could produce *no* effect were it not material; and believers in a personal God, have themselves either to admit that the deity in doing its work has to use material force to produce a physical effect, or—to advocate miracle, which is an absurdity. As A. J. Manley, of Minnesota, very truly observes in a letter:—

"It has ever been an impossibility with me to realize or comprehend an effect, which requires motion or force, as being produced by "nothing." The leaves of the forest are stirred by the gentlest breeze, and yet withhold the breeze, and the leaves cease to move. While gas continues to escape from the tube, apply the match and you will have a brilliant light; cut off the supply and the wonderful phenomenon ceases. Place a magnet near a compass, and the needle is attracted by it; remove the former and the needle will resume its normal condition. By will-power the mesmerist compels his subject to perform various feats, but who becomes normal again when the will is withdrawn.

"I have observed in all physical phenomena, that when the pro-

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NOTE.—This collation of comments by H.P.B. is compiled from notes appearing in volumes III and IV of the *Theosophist*, with sources given by volume and page.

pelling force is withdrawn, the phenomena invariably cease. From these facts, I infer that the producing causes must be material, though we do not see them. Again, if these phenomena were produced by "nothing," it would be impossible to withdraw the producing force, and the manifestations would never cease. Indeed, if such manifestations ever existed, they must of necessity be perpetual."

Concurring fully with the above reasoning, it thus becomes of the utmost necessity for us, and under the penalty of being constantly accused of inconsistency, if not of flat contradictions, to make a well marked difference between those *materialists* who, believing that nothing can exist outside of matter in however sublimated a state, the latter yet believe in various subjective forces unknown to, only because as yet undiscovered by, science; rank sceptics and those *transcendentalists* who, mocking at the majesty of truth and fact fly into the face of logic by saying that "nothing is impossible to God"; that he is an extra-cosmic deity who created the universe out of nothing, was never subject to law, and can produce a *miracle* outside of all physical law and whenever it pleases him, etc. [IV, 105-6.]

. . . the events [in "Can the 'Double' Murder?" printed in *Occult Tales*] actually occurred, and they possess a very deep interest for the student of psychological science. They show in a marked degree the enormous potentiality of the human will upon mesmeric subjects whose whole being may be so imbued with an imparted intellectual preconception that the "double," or *mayavi-rupa,* when projected transcorporeally, will carry out the mesmerizer's mandate with helpless subserviency. The fact that a mortal wound may be inflicted upon the inner man without puncturing the epidermis will be a novelty only to such readers as have not closely examined the records and noted the many proofs that death may result from many psychical causes besides the emotions whose lethal power is universally conceded. [IV, 99.]

It is precisely because we claim to know something of "practical" Occultism in addition to being a Theosophist that we answer without in the least "evading the question" that a mortal wound may be inflicted "not only *upon,* but also by one" inner man upon another. This is the A.B.C. of esoteric mesmerism. The wound is inflicted by neither a real dagger or a hand of flesh bones and blood, but simply *by*—WILL. It is the intense will of the "Gospoja" that

guided the astral or inner body, the *Mayavi-rupa* of Frozya.* It is the passively obedient action of the latter's "double" that scanning space and material obstacles, followed the "trail" of, and found the real murderers. It is again that WILL shaped by the incessant thought of the revenger, that inflicted the internal wounds which though unable to kill or even to hurt the inner man, yet by reaction of the interior *physical* body proved mortal to the latter. If the fluid of the mesmerizer can cure, it can also kill. And now we have "established the fact as scientifically"—as science which generally disbelieves in and rejects such mesmeric phenomena will permit it. For those who believe in, and know something of, mesmerism, this will be plain. As to those who deny it the explanation will appear to them as absurd as any other psychological claim: as much so as the claims of Yogism with it beatitudes of *Samadhi* and other states, for the matter of that. [IV, 246.]

In view of the fact that occult science explains the mysteries of bird-flying and fish-swimming on principles entirely opposed to the accepted scientific theory of the day, one might well hesitate before putting out the true explanation. However, since we already stand so low in the favour of the orthodox scientists, we will say a few words upon the subject; but they must be few indeed. "If," writes our correspondent, "we take the position that birds have the power to make themselves light or heavy *at will,* the phenomenon of their flight becomes easy to comprehend."

And why not take up such a position? Whether by *instinct* or *will,* whether an effect identical with another is produced consciously or unconsciously, by animal or man, the cause underlying that invariable and identical *result* must be one and the same, barring diversity of conditions and exceptions as to unimportant details. The action of certain fishes which, by swallowing large draughts of air, distend an internal bag and thereby, becoming specifically lighter, float above the surface of the water, does not militate against the scientific theory of swimming, when it concerns such fish, man or a bladder filled with air. But we are left as wise as ever, when it is a question of rapid sinking, to the bottom, whether by man or whale. In the former case such sinking might be ascribed to *volition.* But man's inability to sink as rapidly and to such a depth, even though a most experienced diver,—who *has* to sink

*"Gospoja" and "Frozya" are characters in H.P.B.'s story, "Can the 'Double' Murder?", first published as one of the *Occult Tales* in 1876-77 in New York and later reprinted in the *Theosophist* (January, 1883).

himself by a stone—proves that there must be something more than blind instinct or conscious volition. What is it? Occult science tells us the word: it is "a change of polarity and of normal gravity," not yet admissible by science. With birds and animals—as instinctive a mechanical action as any other they execute; with man, when he thus defies the familiar conditions of gravity, it is something he can acquire, in his training as a Yogi. Though the former act unconsciously, and he changes his polarity *at will*, the same cause is made operative, and both produce an identical effect. There are certainly alternating changes of polarity going on in the bird while ascending or dropping, and a maintenance of the same polarity while sailing at any given altitude. [III, 271-72.]

To such "impossible" facts, belong the phenomena of Hypnotism, which have created such a new stir in Germany, Russia and France, as well as the manifestations (belonging to the same kind) produced and observed by Dr. Charcot upon his hysterical patients. With the latter phenomena we must class those induced by the so-called *metaloscopy* and *xiloscopy*. Under the former are meant in medicine the now firmly established facts proving the characteristic influence on the animal organism of various metals and of the magnet, through their simple contact with the skin of the patient: each producing a different effect. As to *xiloscopy,* it is the name given to the same effects produced by various kinds of woods, especially by the quinine bark. *Metaloscopia* has already given birth to *Metalotherapia*—the science of using metals for curative means. The said "impossibilities" begin to be recognized as facts, though a Russian medical *Encyclopædia* does call them "monstrous." The same fate awaits other branches of the occult sciences of the ancients. Hitherto rejected, they now begin to be—although still reluctantly—accepted. Prof. Ziggler of Geneva has well nigh proved the influence of metals, of quinine and of some parts of the living organisms (the ancient fascination of flowers) upon plants and trees. The plant named *Drosera,* the quasi invisible hairs of which are endowed with partial motion, and which was regarded by Darwin as belonging to the insect-eating plants, is shown by Ziggler as affected even at a distance by animal magnetism as well as by certain metals, by means of various conductors. And a quarter century ago M. Adolphe Didier, the famous French somnambule and author, reports that an acquaintance of his met with much success in the experimental application of the mesmeric aura to flowers and fruits to promote their growth, color, flavour,

and perfume. Miss C. L. Hunt, who quotes this fact approvingly in her useful "Compendium of Mesmeric Information," mentions (p. 180, foot-note) that there "are persons who are unable to wear or handle flowers, as they begin to wither and droop directly, as though the vitality of the plant were being appropriated by the wearer, instead of being sustained." To corroborate which foregoing observations by Western authorities, our Brahmin readers need only be reminded of the imperative injunction of their ancient *Sutras* that if any one should even salute a Brahmin when on his way to the river or tank for his morning puja (devotions), he must at once throw away the flowers he is carrying according to the ritualistic custom, return home and procure fresh flowers. This simple explanation being that the magnetic current projected towards him by the salutor taints the floral aura and makes the blossoms no longer fit for the mystical psychic ceremony of which they are necessary accessories. [IV, 107.]

THE POWER OF DIVINITY

True clairvoyance is not gained by "sitting for development." One might sit for development ten million years, and in the end be only capable of sitting. The true power is gained by trying to realize our own divine nature, and to *act* as divinity acts; by trying to get all the possessions possible, that we may place them at the service of our fellow-men. The power is gained by self-sacrificing service, and in no other way. The divine in us has its fullest expression in self-sacrifice. As man moves along, realizing more and more his own nature, working more and more for the natures of every other, he finds spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously within him. He seeks nothing for himself. He seeks all power and all knowledge only that he may help others less endowed. Jesus said: "Let him who would be the greatest among you serve the least." And so it has always been in this great work, that those who were the greatest among us served the least, were the humble ones, who sought no preference, no recognition.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

EVERYDAY OCCULTISM

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA deals with the "House of Life" which every Spiritual being is continually engaged in building for himself throughout that vast period we call a Manvantara, or cycle of evolution. It is a many-storied structure, from whatever point of view regarded, since it can only reach perfection when the individual has embodied in himself the whole of Nature: when macrocosm and microcosm have "re-become One." "Nature," in all her kingdoms, is continually presenting before our eyes the spectacle of evolution in all its stages. Each kingdom, each being in all the kingdoms, represents at every instant this work of construction and reconstruction—the immortal present in the midst of the transitory. We are preoccupied with the transitions and so do not look for the Dweller within the army of forms; cannot see His transit from form to form, from kingdom to kingdom; hence we "believe" in immortality, but see only birth, change, death. The real "conflict between science and religion" is in ourselves: the unending effort to reconcile our faith in immortality with the fact of mortal existence. But when it is recognized that both the mortal and the immortal are phases or aspects of ourselves, our real education begins in earnest. The moment we postulate "evolution" as a fact in Nature, and look at Life from that point of view, we cannot deny its universal prevalence, and must go behind the "fact" to the Law. If we regard facts as "physical" and "law" as metaphysical, then we have before us the Universe in a dual presentment—*not* two universes. No one can imagine Law as having had a beginning, or as subject to dissolution, or as *subject* to "change." Here is the "immortal" in Nature and in ourselves. On the other hand, no one can imagine "matter" or "mind" as *not* subject to change. One whose sight is fixed on ideas or bodies would be blind to the operation of law, and one who tried to understand the nature of imperishable law by a study of forms, physical or metaphysical, would as certainly be, if not blind, trying to see in the dark—an impossible task. The riddle of existence must

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NOTE.—This article is from a series of essays on the *Bhagavad-Gita* first printed in volume 15 of THEOSOPHY.

remain a riddle to both—and this is precisely the evolutionary status of all those whose Devotion is fixed on some form of "religion" or some form of "science."

Arjuna of the *Gita* pictures the man who has failed, and knows that he has failed, to solve the problem of Life from the bases provided by religion and science—the "Yoga" and "Sankhya" doctrines, no matter by what terms designated. But that "failure" is, from the standpoint of Krishna, the right precursor to real progress, to a step in advance on the evolutionary Path for his disciple. So he counsels Arjuna not to give up to the reactionary impulse of nature, but to go on fighting, whether he wins or loses in the struggle for existence, even if his religion and his science are a failure. And when Arjuna wants to know how a man *can* go on fighting with nothing left worth fighting for, Krishna introduces him to the doctrine of the *One* Spirit in the Universe—to "Unity" in the midst of the "Duality" of Karma or "action," that is, "existence."

"God" *in* nature and in man, the "trinity in unity," the "One in three and the Three in One," is given as the true Key to the Mysteries. "Religion" tends constantly to separate God from man and Nature; "science" tends as constantly to separate Man and nature from God. Both are "fixed ideas" and, since there is nothing "fixed" but the Spirit which—

> Runs through all time, extends through
> all extent,
> Lives undivided, operates unspent,

—it follows that all fixed ideas are but partial and so erroneous perceptions, no matter how venerated and sanctified, and are subject to dissolution. Arjuna has to go behind both religion and science, has to "rise above them," has to "retreat" to the inviolable altar of his own inmost being before he can "see" what Krishna means. Although religion and science are but "maya," or "snares of delusion," there is, nevertheless, some Truth in them, both theoretically and practically, for the Spirit is absent from nothing, not even from the false or erroneous—and it is the presence of Truth or the "Spirit" which makes "no effort wasted"—not the fixed ideas of the devotee.

Arjuna wants the Key delivered into his hands "right away" by Krishna, for, like ourselves, he is still affected by the race mind,

and so thinks that Krishna can do for him what both religion and science have failed to do. He demands of Krishna:

> " . . . choose one method amongst them by which I may obtain happiness, and explain it unto me."

This is none other than the personal god idea which, under one mask or another is the real enemy of mankind, its "Dweller of the threshold." Parents as well as children are affected by it, for the children expect to be "provided for" by their parents, and parental affection stimulates us all to "do for" our children and "plan out" for them their "future." Teachers and pupils in school are affected by it: adults in every walk of life are under its sway. All of us are busily engaged in one way or another in telling or in being told "what to do," in this, that, and the other condition. But it is in religion and science as the house of life handed down from generation to generation that the hold of the personal god idea reigns supreme and unquestioned as oracle of conduct. It is the notion of Authority substituted for that of Law: the assumption that some other Being can know for us, can think for us, can choose for us, or that we can perform these functions for others. To take either pole of this pernicious doctrine is in fact to deny Evolution, is to make of man and of nature a "creature" and a "creation"—whether of "God" or of "Matter." The very idea of evolution implies the power to perceive, to act, to know, to choose, for one's Self as the basic element of all progression.

To cease to be the creature of circumstances, the follower of any Being or any Doctrine—this is quite another matter than merely to go from one Authority to another, from one "Teacher" or "Teaching" to another. It means to discard once and for all the *idea* of Rulership in any form or in any guise; to emancipate one's Self from *subjection* to any Power soever but one's own Will and, equally, to emancipate one's Self from its opposite, the idea that we have any "call" or "mission" or "right" or "duty" to control the Will of any other being than our Self. It means the assertion of one's own Divinity, to become one's own Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, Regenerator. How else is anyone to fulfil the injunction, "Man, know *thyself?*" How else is there to be *Spiritual* evolution?

So Krishna neither chooses for Arjuna nor explains to him, in the sense Arjuna desired and that we all demand of our Teacher. On the contrary, Krishna proceeds simply to present again the

metaphysical facts. Beyond selfishness and unselfishness lies "selflessness in action." Beyond religion and science, with all their rules and practices, lies the unrestricted domain of Free Will and Liberty of Thought, in which the Soul, having asserted its own divinity, accepts of itself and for itself the unlimited Responsibility for all the consequences which may ensue from its own conduct. This is pointed out as Krishna's own reason for living, for moving among men, for being in the chariot with Arjuna, for his own "indifference as to those doctrines which are already taught or which are yet to be taught." To live life for Life's sake is to be a God on one's own account, and of necessity to become participant in the Divine usufruct of all Life. Until this position is assumed by the candidate, and *acted on,* he *is* but the creature of circumstances, not their Master. His is but a slave's task in life, because he will only assume a slave's place in nature. If he aspires to the Kingly Knowledge he must act on the knowledge he already has, be it much or little, and willingly accept the consequences of his ignorance. This is the only "right performance of action"—the business of life.

We can imagine Arjuna trembling in the balance before such audacity as Krishna's which proposes as the way out of his difficulties that instead of acting like a man Arjuna shall henceforth act like a God, which includes *all* actions. And when Krishna propounds this as the true concept of "duty" or "devotion," no wonder Arjuna asks his next question. If our duty is to "mind our own business" and let all others mind theirs, then we have been all along guilty of the most heinous of crimes against nature, while thinking we were doing our duty, and have committed innumerable offenses against the good Law. What "Yoga" has "propelled" us? What "secret force" has "constrained us," *against* our Will, against the very Law of our own immortal Being?

> "It is lust which instigates him. It is passion. By this—the constant enemy of the wise man—is discriminative knowledge surrounded."

Krishna's whole reply to Arjuna's question in the Third chapter is a discourse on "human nature," *i.e.,* the false conception that evolution is ended and over with, whereas, in point of Spiritual fact it only *begins* with human nature. It is only Man who "sees the Self"—who is Self-conscious. Although science and religion will admit, as would any man, saint or sinner, educated or ignorant, that Self-consciousness is the highest form of life, of mat-

ter, of intelligence, it no more occurs to us than it did to Arjuna that Self-consciousness may be employed as *the* "instrument of Perception." We employ our bodies, our senses, our minds, to gain knowledge, *i.e., experience* of Life, but seldom do we reflect that if mere experience could give us Wisdom we had all long since become Krishnas ourselves, for every man has been through every kind of experience countless times—and all our understanding of Life is embodied in the two words "religion" and "science," which we have found out to be a failure. If Wisdom is a term to designate properly what is to be gained by experience, then the two represent the two poles of Evolution. Body, senses, mind—these are "instruments of action," whether the "action"—or Karma—is physical, sensuous (astral), or mental (psychic). None of them, being but "principles" or "agents of action," is or can be the Perceiver, the real Being, the Higher Self.

"The Soul *is* the Perceiver." This is not a mere phrase, but the Eternal Verity. Not knowing this, and since Unity is the *fact,* the "sense of Self" can no more stand alone than anything else in Life. We *have* to identify Self with "something" and in our ignorance identify Self with some of its instruments—our virtues or vices, our success or failure, our "creator" or some "creation." This false sense of Self is the great Maya, the "great illusion" called "human nature." There remains, when all other attachments fail or fall, the One Reality, the identity of the Soul with the SELF, of the Life in our form with the Life in all forms.

Up to this point in Spiritual evolution the "Three Qualities of Nature" (the three Kingdoms of Elementals) have *embodied us.* The point of view reversed—and we are no longer "incarnated"; we are "emancipated from the *bonds* of conditional existence"; we are in "Matter" but not of it; we have found the Path. Now it is for us to make ourselves ready to tread it.

How shall that be done? How shall we use the Key now in our hands? Krishna's reply gives the *true* Yoga. "At the very outset" we are to *restrain our senses.* We are to use our eyes to see, our ears to hear, our minds to cogitate, our own duty. If any man thinks this is "easy," that he is already doing this, let him employ his *self*-perception for ten minutes. He will find his "senses and organs" and his other "faculties" have been "devoted" almost entirely to matters that are "none of his business." Those who really desire a rule of conduct, a "Yoga practice," for everyday occultism may

find it ready to hand in Krishna's reply to Arjuna's query as to the "secret force" which "propels a man to commit offenses." To be ruled by the senses is to make the Higher Self the slave of the Lower. To rule *them* is to make the Lower Self (human nature) the servant of the Higher. We are to begin the battle by keeping body, senses and mind fully engaged in "the *right* performance of action"—attending to our own affairs, doing our own duty.

WILL AND DESIRE

WILL is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

DESIRE, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considerd as opposed.

Thus Will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; Desire the motive power of the animal life.

Most men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable and ever changing, while will is steady and constant.

Both will and desire are absolute *creators,* forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently—desire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and conquest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification.

—LUCIFER

letters · questions · comment

Why is the Third Fundamental Proposition called the "pivotal doctrine," rather than the First or the Second?

Since a "pivot" is that on which things turn, a pivotal doctrine would be one that throws light on the basis and meaning of action. The Third Fundamental, dealing with evolution, progress, and realization, does exactly this. The First Fundamental Proposition does not speak of achievement; it simply affirms the all-pervasive reality of the Rootless Root, or "Be-ness." The Second is concerned with cyclic law—the orderly processes which make the field of all manifested existence and experience.

As given in the statement of the Third Proposition, the "pivotal doctrine" shows that man in his essential nature is a spark from the Unknown Root, and that his development, once the man stage is reached, depends upon his own exertions. Indeed, it is this idea that is stressed as "pivotal." Man, it might be added, is "pivotal" in relation to the development of all the rest of nature and life. Since in him all classes of intelligence meet and mingle, his decisions either raise or lower the level of the lives which are moving along the path of evolution. As Mr. Judge says in the *Ocean*: "It is all for the experience and emancipation of the soul, for the purpose of raising the entire mass of manifested matter up to the stature, nature, and dignity of conscious godhood."

H.P.B. states in The Secret Doctrine *that "no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence" before the spark which issued from the* OVER-SOUL *has passed through all forms of life, and gained individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts. How is independence to be understood as a goal of evolution?*

"Goal" does not seem quite the right designation. "Independence" is rather the means of self-determined choice, for how could any of the qualities we associate with the godlike or divine be developed without the power of independent decision? The goal is self-knowledge, which means knowledge of the totality of life and being in the great manvantaric cycle of manifestation. The

means to this end is variously described in *The Secret Doctrine,* but always the power of self-conscious decision is involved. The self-conscious entity is distinctively the channel through which the will may act, under the direction of spiritual intelligence. There is for example this statement (II, 103):

> Had not the "sons of Mahat," speaking allegorically, skipped the intermediate worlds, in their impulse toward intellectual freedom, the animal man would never have been able to reach upward from this earth, and attain through self-exertion his ultimate goal. The cyclic pilgrimage would have to be performed through all the planes of existence half unconsciously, if not entirely so, as in the case of the animals. It is owing to this rebellion of intellectual life against the morbid inactivity of pure spirit, that we are what we are—self-conscious, thinking men, with the capabilities and attributes of Gods in us, for good as much as for evil. Hence the REBELS are our saviours. Let the philosopher ponder well over this, and more than one mystery will become clear to him. It is only by the attractive force of the contrasts that the two opposites—Spirit and Matter—can be cemented on Earth, and, smelted in the fire of self-conscious experience and suffering, find themselves wedded in Eternity.

The necessity of individual or independent consciousness to the entire process of manifestation and evolution is implied in the statement of the First Fundamental Proposition:

> Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I," a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue. (I, 15.)

Self-consciousness and independence are virtually synonyms, and this state of being is wholly dependent for its existence upon the dual principles of spirit and matter, which become fused in individual conscious intelligences. This leads, through long cycles of earthly experience, to knowledge of good and evil. "No Entity," says H.P.B., "whether angelic or human, can reach the state of Nirvana, or of absolute purity, except through æons of suffering and the *knowledge* of EVIL as well as of good, as otherwise the latter remains incomprehensible." (II, 81.)

THEATERS OF GROWTH

WHERE, when, and how does human evolution really begin? A generation or two from now, students of anthropology may begin to suspect that the physicalization and biologizing of all thought about human development was a terrible price to pay for the emancipation of the Western mind from the dogma of "creation" in the Garden of Eden. There is a pointless artificiality about the enthusiasm with which new discoveries of ancient bones are hailed. The recent find of parts of the jaws and teeth of a skull exhibiting traits "indicative of the genus homo" near a river in central Ethiopia, at a site which pushes man's supposed origins back another million years, may provide a wholesome shakeup in anthropological and archaeological theory, but so far as true human evolution is concerned, such fossil remains are a distracting preoccupation. Eventually, perhaps, the "excavation" approach to human history will help to shatter the assumptions which stand in the way of a philosophical anthropology, but the real "breakthrough" will come when scientists and others begin to recognize the irrelevance of "bones" to the dawn of human history.

The true man, *The Secret Doctrine* makes clear, is a being of *mind*. There is indeed a physical line of evolution, but the production of the human form was but preparation for the psychic, intellectual, and spiritual development which required a material focus. The physical body, it is said, serves as the "vehicle for the 'growth' (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and—owing to the accumulation of experiences—of the finite into the INFINITE, of the transient into the Eternal and Absolute." (*S.D.*I, 181.)

The difference between physical evolution and the unfolding egoity made possible by these transformations is definitively explained:

> Now the evolution of the *external* form or body round the *astral* is produced by the terrestrial forces, just as in the case of the lower kingdoms; but the evolution of the internal or real MAN is purely spiritual. It is now no more a passage of the

> impersonal Monad through many and various forms of matter—endowed at best with instinct and consciousness on quite a different plane—as in the case of external evolution, but a journey of the "pilgrim-soul" through various *states* of *not only matter* but Self-consciousness and self-perception. . . . (I, 175.)

What, then, inaugurates man's distinctively human development? When does the journey of the "pilgrim-soul" begin?

The answer is a familiar one. Human evolution begins with the lighting up of Manas. With the awakening—awakening and incarnation—of Mind there begins a growth toward perfection through the assimilation by the Monad "of many successive personalities." (I, 171.) How are "personalities" made? Again the answer is familiar. Personalities result from the fact that upon incarnation the Manasic ray becomes dual. Through this duality the intelligence within can obtain "sufficient touch" with the forms evolved by Nature "to allow of their accumulating experiences through its means." This is the only way that the Monads involved can "reach a higher plane of activity and self-consciousness." (*S.D.* I, 180, 182.) The law governing psycho-spiritual development is put precisely:

> . . . the two higher principles *can have no individuality on Earth,* cannot be *man,* unless there is (*a*) the Mind, the *Manas-Ego,* to cognize itself, and (*b*) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of egotistical desires and personal Will, to cement the whole, as if round a pivot (which it is, truly), to the physical form of man. It is the *Fifth* and the *Fourth* principles—*Manas* and *Kama rupa*—that contain the dual personality: the real immortal Ego (*if it assimilates itself to the two higher*) and the false and transitory personality, the *mayavi* or astral body, so-called, or the *animal-human* Soul—the two having to be closely blended for purposes of a *full* terrestrial existence. (II, 241.)

We come now to the question of what the production of personalities *means,* in terms of evolutionary process and human experience. It means, first of all, a measure of delusion—apparently for all those who have not yet perfected their intellectuality, become "independent and self-conscious entities, *on this plane* of matter." (II, 167.) Before the seating of the mind principle in the body, there could be neither struggle nor growth—and, therefore, no *human* evolution. Late in volume II of the *S.D.* H.P.B. describes the difference between the two conditions in terms of psychic processes and states. Until the embodiment of mind, she shows, "there had been no regular death, but only a transforma-

tion, for *men had no personality* as yet." She continues:

> They had monads—breaths of the ONE Breath, and as impersonal as the source from which they proceeded. They had bodies, or rather shadows of bodies, which were sinless, hence *Karmaless*. Therefore, as there was no Kamaloka—least of all Nirvana or even Devachan—for the "souls" of men who had no personal *Egos*, there could be no intermediate periods between the incarnations. Like the Phoenix, primordial man resurrected out of his old into a new body. Each time, with each new generation, he became more solid, more physically perfect, agreeably with the evolutionary law, which is the *Law of Nature*. Death came with the complete physical organism, and with it—moral decay. (II, 610.)

The making of Karma, then, marks the beginning of human evolution. The establishment of the planes of Kamaloka and Devachan is another aspect of the same beginning. The wrestling with delusive ideas of the self is the very meaning of human evolution, the triumph and fulfillment coming with realization of the Self.

What, then, are the after-death states? They are polarized expressions of the psychic processes of human discovery and delusion. H.P.B. calls them "intermediate periods" which separate one life from another. They are times of completion and assimilation, of discharge and selection under the laws of affinity and compatibility. Since no advanced adept ever dreams, we may assume that no advanced adept is ever captive of either Kamaloka or Devachan. He has a vehicle which gives him immunity to illusion—a vehicle forged of knowledge itself.

How long, for ordinary men, will the evolutionary struggle proceed? It will continue in ways now familiar to us, until man regains once more his primordial condition, and is freed, like the adept, of both his "coats of skin" and the illusions which result from the thraldom of the senses. When will that be? We are given no timetable save in the most general terms. However, even in this Round, it is said, when the Sixth Race is the field of evolution, mankind "will be rapidly growing out of its bonds of matter, and even of flesh." (II, 446.)

Meanwhile, we have for our instruction the teaching of the after-death states, in which we may study the very stuff of our inner development. Kamaloka exhibits one sort of precipitate of the elements in the personality, Devachan another. Little wonder, then, that we are given so much instruction in them, and invited to find analogues through individual application and analogy of what is

taught. "Learn, then, well," H.P.B. urged, "the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races." The subtle metabolic processes of the psyche, explained and displayed in the teaching of the after-death states, are fundamental to an understanding of Karma and Reincarnation.

THE DYNAMICS OF EFFORT

We have been so accustomed for many years to vague ideas about the human mind, what it is, and what its powers really are, that people in general have no definite notion whether there be or not any material effect in the human economy from thoughts, or whether they are like what is usually called "imagination," a something very unreal and wholly without objectivity. But it is a fact that the mind of the selfish person is always making about itself a hard reflecting surface which throws off and away from its grasp the very knowledge the man himself would take if he but knew the reason why he fails.

This brings us naturally to the proposition that the aims of members in a Branch should be to eradicate selfishness and to promulgate and illustrate the doctrine of universal brotherhood, basing the explanation upon the actual unity of all beings. This of itself will lead to the explanation of many other doctrines, as it underlies them all, great and small. And in order to do this the members ought to study the system as a whole, so that its parts may be comprehended. It is for the want of such study that we so often hear members, when asked to explain theosophy, saying, "Well, to tell the truth, I know how it all is, but am not able to make it clear to you." They are not clear because they have not taken the time and trouble to learn the few fundamental propositions and how to apply them to any and every question.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

on the lookout

Foundation of Mental Health

A reader of the *Saturday Review/World* recently found reason to defend a *SR/W* reviewer who had written critically of the film, *The Exorcist*. While this movie has already had attention in Lookout, and hardly needs further comment, the *SR/W* reader's appreciation of the review by Ralph R. Greenson, a psychiatrist, deserves notice. The reader said in a letter (July, 1974):

> Dr. Greenson says that by its glorification of the demon, *The Exorcist* gives support to those who seek to evade responsibility for their actions; and it is precisely this lack of moral responsibility which endangers our very "humanness," as we explain away the evils around us, and is the reason why *The Exorcist* should be characterized as "a menace to mental health." Dr. Greenson is defining mental health not just in the limiting manner of lack of hysteria . . . but also in the more encompassing framework of a morality that accepts a duty to our fellow man, together with a responsibility for our own actions, which also includes coming to terms with our inner selves.

It would be difficult to improve on this comment, from a philosophical point of view. Apart from the superstition and psychism involved, the demonism of such stories and performances is an inevitable concomitant of the personal-God idea and plays a part in the weakening influence of reliance on an outside deity. External scapegoats do indeed free us of responsibility, at the same time making us submissively dependent upon an outside "savior." Reflection on these psycho-moral realities of human life makes clear why Madame Blavatsky grounded her entire work on the Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*.

"Proof" of Reincarnation?

The Sunday edition of the *New York Daily News*, Aug. 4, 1974, began a series of articles on reincarnation, based largely on the researches of and interviews with Dr. Ian Stevenson, the University of Virginia psychiatrist who has been investigating reported instances of rebirth for more than twenty years. Dr. Stevenson is

best known for his book, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation,* published by the University Press of Virginia. Unfortunately, the dramatic evidence which the *Daily News* editor, Alton Slagle, uses to open up the subject is the capacity of an American woman to speak Swedish when her hypnotist husband, also a doctor, places her in trance. While in this condition she spoke in a deep masculine voice and identified herself as having been a peasant who lived in a small Swedish town three centuries ago, giving his name and the story of his life, which was ended by a blow in the head. "I think it almost certain," Dr. Stevenson is quoted as saying, "that the subject could not have learned Swedish, the language to which she reverted as she recounted a past life, by normal means." In a forthcoming book titled *Xenoglossy* (a term meaning this capacity to speak an unlearned language), Dr. Stevenson relates that the subject's physician husband eventually abandoned attempts to communicate with the Swedish peasant identity of his wife because he feared this might lead to "permanent possession."

Egoic Powers

Since this woman, while in trance, first spoke in broken English, with a strong Swedish accent, and later talked in Swedish, the possibility of obsession cannot be ruled out, especially in view of the fact that hypnotism is hardly the means of gaining access to true egoic memory. However, H.P.B.'s observations on such cases may indicate significant differences in the kinds of trance which lead to psychic recollections or capacities. She writes in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 131):

> How is it that the servant-girls in a poor farm-house could speak Hebrew and play the violin in their trance or somnambulic state, and knew neither in their normal condition? Because, as every genuine psychologist of the old, not your modern, school, will tell you, the Spiritual Ego can act only when the personal Ego is paralysed. The Spiritual "I" in man is omniscient and has every knowledge innate in it; while the personal self is the creature of its environment and the slave of the physical memory. Could the former manifest itself uninterruptedly, and without impediment, there would be no longer men on earth, but we should all be gods.

Source of Impressions

The basic question, then, in cases of this sort, concerns the kind of memory which comes into play. If it is Egoic memory,

then the explanation of reincarnation, as seems suggested in the passage from the *Key*, would apply. If the memory is personal, then it is skandhic in character and comes from impressions reflected on the waves of the astral light, with its coherence depending upon the condition of the psychic remains which are their source. In the case reported by Dr. Stevenson, three hundred years seems a long time for such psychic remains to survive and to produce the phenomena of "possession," while it is a period perhaps sufficient for rebirth to be a possibility. Still other factors are involved. Concluding her consideration of the examples given in the *Key*, H.P.B. says:

> Thus the examples cited above of somnambulists, a poor servant speaking Hebrew, and another playing the violin, give you an illustration of the case in point. This does not mean that the explanations of these two facts offered us by medical science have no truth in them, for one girl had, years before, heard her master, a clergyman, read Hebrew works aloud, and the other had heard an artist playing a violin at their farm. But neither could have done so as perfectly as they did had they not been ensouled by THAT which, owing to the sameness of its nature with the Universal Mind, is omniscient. Here the higher principle acted on the Skandhas and moved them; in the other, the personality being paralysed, the individuality manifested itself. Pray do not confuse the TWO.

Effects of Hypnotism

Quite evidently, profound complexities may be involved in all such wonderful occurrences, and a simple explanation by reference to either reincarnation or obsession may not be the right one. In the case reported by Dr. Stevenson, the prejudicial factor of hypnotism is added, requiring the limitations imposed by this sort of trance to be considered. The contrasting effects of Mesmerism and hypnotism, described by French medical men and cited as "wholesome truths" by H.P.B. in "Black Magic in Science," have a bearing on any theorizing concerning evidence of reincarnation obtained through hypnotic regression. Mesmerism may heal, she says, while hypnotism often *inoculates*, which seems especially suggestive in relation to the possibility of obsession. H.P.B. calls hypnotism "a sorry effect, forsooth, of the 'Breath of Cybele'," which lowers the subject to the level of an animal. Of its practitioners, she declared: "Let them only think of dangers bred, of new forms of diseases, mental and physical, begotten by such insane handling of psychic will!"

Laws of Rebirth

Apart from this matter of hypnotic regression, the *Daily News* article is often generally informing. The writer says:

> The idea of reincarnation, or rebirth, is nothing new. Ancient philosophers wrote of it, men like Pythagoras, Plotinus, Origen, Empedocles. Plato made it an important assumption in his philosophy.

Among the cases of presumed memory of past lives described in this article is the well-known one of Shanti Devi, first known in 1936, and considered at some length in an article in THEOSOPHY (vol. 26, 172). A more recent instance is the case of a five-year-old Druse boy. Of fifty-seven claims to knowledge of his past life, Stevenson found fifty-one correct, the report relates. But here, as in the case of Shanti Devi, the "proof" is dubious since it identifies the Druse boy with a man who had died only nine years before, thus raising all the difficulties which apply to the supposition that a grown man can reincarnate with the same astral monad. This was declared impossible by H.P.B., except in cases of abortion, of death before a certain age, and idiocy (*Isis Unveiled* I, 351). There is also the *Secret Doctrine* statement: " . . . save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident, no Spiritual Entity can re-incarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed." Later installments of the *Daily News* series deal with other cases of supposed reincarnation from Dr. Stevenson's files.

Various "Misgivings"

Eleven eminent biologists headed by Paul Berg, a biochemist at Stanford University, recently announced their intention to seek a ban on use of an experimental technique which makes possible the genetic manipulation of living cells and viruses. (*Science,* July 26, 1974.) The danger they anticipate is that by introducing into bacteria genes "which confer either resistance to antibiotics or ability to form bacterial toxins," the bacteria so treated would menace people with disease, since "the bacteria endowed with such genes might escape and infect the population, particularly since the standard bacterium used by molecular biologists is . . . a common inhabitant of the human gut." Interestingly, a *Science* editorial in the same issue remarks that there is no trace in the Berg group's proposal of "any long-range misgivings about biological warfare or the social impact of genetic engineering."

The Physicists

The neglect of such questions—which are of such grave concern to scientists of the caliber of Barry Commoner and Catherine Roberts, both of whom have written critically at some length about the experiments and claims of the molecular biologists in respect to "genetic engineering"—shadows the claim in *Science* that the proposed ban on experiments with bacteria marks the first time that biologists have called attention to the possible hazards of their work, and also the first time that such investigators have suggested a halt in their own research. This may be so, in respect to biologists, but the threat to health involved seems obvious enough, and the restraint proposed somewhat less than heroic. In relation to the self-restraint of scientists, one is inclined to think more respectfully of the several nuclear scientists and others, such as Linus Pauling, who have been outspoken in condemning nuclear research for military applications. The first scientist to refuse to do such work was Otto Hahn, who with Lise Meitner discovered nuclear fission back in 1939. There were others who later took this position, among them British physicists associated with M. E. Oliphant, and in America Norbert Wiener refused to help in the design of guided missiles. Going back further in time, Leonardo da Vinci, certainly a scientist in his way, suppressed development of some of his machines for warmaking—one a submarine—and Diderot interrupted his theorizing concerning man as a mere biological machine for fear of its demoralizing effect on mankind. Then, in our own time, publication of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* was begun by concerned physicists and others who sought to restrain research in certain directions and to raise the sort of questions that Harold Urey, Leo Szilard, and others were asking in the late 1940s.

Improvement on Fort Detrick's Poisons?

So, broadly speaking, there is ample precedent for self-restraint among scientists. It seems well that these molecular biologists have become cautious in the production of infectious bacteria, but, as *Science* wonders editorially, if the ban is observed and extended, will it then "become apparent that control of the new technique is not much easier than the containment of nuclear weapons"? The *Science* news story observes in passing:

> Also uncertain is whether the ban will be observed by countries interested in the new technique's considerable potential for

biological warfare. Many millions of dollars were invested at the U.S. Army's biological warfare laboratories at Fort Detrick, Maryland, in trying—without much success—to improve on the lethality of viruses and bacteria harmful to man. The new technique offers a theoretically possible way of accomplishing precisely that.

Where Restraint Is Needed

In view of the prediction by a National Institute of Health scientist that while the technique requires a moderate degree of sophistication at present, it will be a "high school project within a few years," there seems little cause for jubilation over the announcement of these biologists. The restraint ought to come where no one thinks of applying it—in the area of dogmatic assumption that man is no more than an animal organism, and that there are no moral issues in the manipulation of his hereditary endowment. Present-day biologists might improve their understanding of the responsibilities of scientists by taking into consideration the scruples of even the materialist, Diderot!

Growing Responsibility

Fortunately, however, "restraint" is now in the air. The Mayor and City Council of Madison, Wisconsin, recently voted to withhold approval of construction of a nuclear reactor in the environs of that city (*Nation,* Aug. 17, 1974). The nuclear plant would consume 1400 acres of choice farmland, drain up to 50,000 gallons of water per minute from a nearby lake, and put in Madison's backyard an installation that is "already banned from importation into Great Britain for safety and design reasons." The city, according to report, "generally opposes nuclear fission as being a hazardous, unreliable and inadvisable method for producing electrical energy." The non-partisan character of the voting and the fact that the city Council's two hours of deliberation included testimony from dairy farmers in the surrounding area, health and safety information from University of Wisconsin professors, statements by presidents of two of the utilities involved, and from an attorney specializing in environmental matters, indicates that responsible social action may be reaching a new level on the current scene.

Need for Trust

Teaching "self-reliance" is not something that anyone knows much about, yet when circumstances and educational methods suppress it, then thoughtful teachers may begin to wonder about ways to give self-reliance some encouragement. This is the subject of an article by Urie Bronfenbrenner in the August, 1974, *Scientific American*. Discussing "The Origins of Alienation," he proposes that helping children to have primary involvement with people instead of "things" may be the best way to counteract the present disintegration of trust and emotional security—qualities of life which once provided the base from which children move into society as adults. Dr. Bronfenbrenner's idea is to re-create these relationships out of the conditions and materials now at hand.

Community Environment

Using the Head Start program as an example he shows that making a program "work" depends on providing people the means to create what they need for themselves—not on any formula. Parents and others in the child's immediate environment must play a large part in both planning and participation. Further:

> It means that the program cannot be confined to the center but must reach out into the home and the community so that the entire neighborhood is caught up in activities in behalf of its children. We need to experiment with putting day-care centers within reach of the significant people in the child's life. For some families this will mean neighborhood centers, for others centers at the place of work. A great deal of variation and innovation will be required to find the appropriate solutions for different groups in different settings.

Importance of Work

Children, Dr. Bronfenbrenner says, need to be included in the work of their parents and other adults. He is not the only one who says this. Arthur Morgan said the same thing many years ago, Paul Goodman has written about it at length, and J. H. Van den Berg (in *The Changing Nature of Man*) has put this need into the simplest possible terms:

> To the eyes of the child, maturity is invisible. In the past, if a child walked through the streets of his town, he could see and hear all around him how trades were practiced, one of which trades he would himself choose later on. The rope-maker, the smith, the brazier, the cooper, the carpenter, they all worked

in places accessible to any child; in their houses, in workyards, or somewhere in the open. Today most trades are shut away in factories, where children are not allowed. How can a child know what happens there? His father, when he comes home from work, brings with him at most a story and a smell; no doubt these are important indications, but they are only indications: the reality itself remains invisible.

"Research" Is Going On

Dr. Bronfenbrenner writes along the same lines, if more cautiously:

> One of the most significant effects of age segregation in our society has been isolation of children from the world of work. . . . Although there is no systematic research evidence on this subject, it appears likely that the absence of such exposure contributes significantly to the growing alienation among children and young people. Experience in other modern urban societies indicates that the isolation of children from adults in the world of work is not inevitable; it can be countered by creative social innovations.

He finds examples of such innovations in the practice of the Soviet Union, where children's "wards" can be found in factories, offices, and businesses. This, however, is on a large, institutional scale, and inquirers might be more interested in the "creative social innovations" now going on in America. It happens that last year's July-August issue of *Communities* (Twin Oaks, Louisa, Va.) is entirely devoted to reports by communitarians on the care, upbringing, and education of children, telling what is being learned by the parents and others who are part of these "extended families." What they report may not qualify as "systematic research evidence" of the sort Dr. Bronfenbrenner refers to, yet prove valuable to many parents concerned with the need for basic change in environmental influence for the young.

"Double-Think"

It cannot be ignored, however, that many present-day livelihoods are alienating even for adults because they do such violence to them as human beings. In the April 6, 1974 *Nation* ("Night Thoughts About Progress"), E. F. Schumacher writes about the segmentation of life from an adult standpoint:

> The thoughtful businessman, it seems to me, finds himself today in an extraordinarily difficult and confusing situation. His thinking and acting have lost all unity; he leads a double life

and engages in double-think. At his office, he thinks and acts on the basis of one set of assumptions; but when he gets home, opens the papers and learned journals, switches on the television, or consults the books in current debate, he finds himself called upon to think and act on the basis of assumptions which are not merely different from, but diametrically opposed to his workday models.

A Divided Life

The problems he encounters in both situations relate to the same subject matter, yet there is no real point of contact. The vocabulary is different; the diagnosis is different; the aims and objects are different; and the prospects are different. From 9 to 5, the businessman struggles for growth, expansion, rationalization, labor saving, job elimination, even automation; all meant, and expected, to lead to ever increasing prosperity, ease and happiness. After hours, however, he finds himself bombarded by urgent appeals to limit growth and by prophecies of doom, breakdown of civilization, ecological disaster and exhaustion of resources. During the day, he studies every conceivable way to speed things up; whereas after hours he cannot avoid encountering every conceivable argument in books like *The Limits to Growth* or *Blueprint for Survival,* calling for stabilization, for slowing down rather than speeding up. He finds himself confronted with analyses which suggest that it is from his successes, not his failures, that he has most to fear; that it is not the poor but the rich who threaten the survival of Spaceship Earth, not the unsuccessful but the successful, not the multitudes on the lower deck but the relatively small number of first-class passengers. His life is divided, every day, every week, between periods which bring tasks and challenges that cannot be reconciled.

"They Are Ourselves"

Dr. Schumacher remarks that the young in particular are questioning the system, not because they themselves are deprived but because they feel that it cannot lead to life as it should be lived by human beings. They are criticizing it, not technically or politically, but philosophically. That is why, he says, the young deserve serious attention:

The revolution is about the basic human values which are being sacrificed and abandoned by the very successes of "the system." . . . "Growth," if applied to the affluent societies, is to them a dirty word. "Limits to growth" or "zero-growth," if applied to two-thirds of humanity, the poor people of the Third World, is to them, also, a dirty word. I am talking about the best among the young, not about drug addicts or other

> escapists. We cannot write them off; we must take them seriously. They are not foreigners whom we might leave to stew in their own juice. They are ourselves. They externalize that part within ourselves which I describe as our own thinking and feeling "after hours."

The Measure of Freedom

According to Dr. Bronfenbrenner, the way to listen to the young is to provide a variety of opportunities for them to exchange ideas and assistance with people of other ages, younger and older, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. A study of German children living in new model communities, as compared to those living in older German cities, revealed that they measure their freedom less by the open areas available to them than by the people and things around them that excited their imagination. This is perhaps why John Holt (quoted in *Manas,* Sept. 4, 1974), in *Escape from Childhood,* proposes that children be given the same legal rights that adults enjoy. The fact that few children possess the maturity to assume this responsibility is not at issue. Children are human beings from birth, not economically useful objects, as they have been in the past in rural communities—or commercially exploitable tools, as in the factories of recent centuries, or toys, as in the present—until they escape into adulthood by coming of age. From this standpoint, they possess the same innate capacities for judgment and imagination as adults, if in more limited degree. This basic assumption, regardless of the modifications necessary to individual circumstances, might make the starting point for the reconstruction of an integrated society, working from within.